



SMALL TOWN, BIG BEACH

2012 MUNICIPAL ELECTION INFORMATION PACKET

VOTER INFORMATION

1. Register to Vote pg. 1
2. Frequently Asked Questions pg. 2
3. Schedule of Dates – Additional Information pg. 3
4. How to Vote by Absentee Ballot pgs. 4 -5
5. Important Deadlines for Voting Absentee pg. 6
6. Sample Ballot for August 28, 2012 Municipal Election pg. 7

CANDIDATE ELECTION INFORMATION

7. Qualifications for Office pg. 8
8. Election Deadlines for Candidates pgs. 9 - 10
9. Election Forms for Candidates pg. 11
10. Candidate Filing Guidelines pgs. 12 - 13
11. Campaign Signs pg. 14

For more information contact the City Clerk:

Wanda Parris, CMC
(251) 968-1125
wparris@gulfshoresal.gov



SMALL TOWN, BIG BEACH

Register to Vote

Anyone wishing to register to vote may download and fill out [Alabama's Voter Registration Form](#). Please mail the completed form to:

Baldwin County Board of Registrars
P.O. Box 1507
Bay Minette, AL 36507

Verify your Voter Registration

It is best to [verify your voter registration](#) prior to applying for an absentee ballot. If there is a problem with your registration, you will need to register again before proceeding.

NOTE: Most people receive their voter registration cards in the mail 2-3 weeks after registering to vote. Don't worry if you lost your voter registration card. You don't actually need it to vote.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to provide ID when I register to vote?

There are no special ID requirements for first-time voters since all Alabama voters need to provide ID when voting in person or by absentee ballot.

Do I need to provide ID when I vote by absentee ballot?

All absentee voters must include a copy of their ID with their absentee ballot. Acceptable forms of voter ID include:

- Government-issued photo ID
- Employee photo ID
- Alabama college, university photo ID technical or professional school photo ID
- Utility bill, bank statement, government paycheck, or paycheck with voter's name and address
- Valid ID card (authorized by law) issued by the State of or by any of the other 49 states or issued by the US government
- US passport
- Alabama hunting or fishing license
- Alabama pistol/revolver permit
- Valid pilot's license
- Valid US military ID
- Birth certificate
- Social Security card
- Naturalization document
- Court record of adoption
- Court record of name change
- Valid Medicaid or Medicare card
- Valid electronic benefits transfer card
- Government document that shows the name and address of the voter.

I've missed the absentee ballot application deadline. Is there anything I can do?

In most cases, the answer is no. There are two conditions, however, under which you can apply for an Emergency Absentee Ballot: if you are required by an employer under unforeseen circumstances to be out of the county on Election Day for an emergency business trip, or have a medical emergency requiring treatment from a licensed physician.

If you face either of these situations, use the Alabama Application for an Emergency Absentee Ballot. The business emergency application contains an affidavit acknowledging that the voter was not aware of the out-of-county business trip prior to the normal absentee ballot deadline. The medical emergency application requires that the attending physician describe and certify the circumstances as constituting an emergency.

Emergency Absentee Ballot Applications can be submitted after the absentee ballot application deadline but no later than 5 PM on the day before the election.

Additional Information

State Election Website: <http://www.sos.state.al.us/Elections/Default.aspx>

When is the next municipal election?

2012 Elections for Mayor and City Council - 2012 candidates list will be updated starting July 3, 2012 and end July 17, 2012.

Schedule of Dates

July 3	Notice of Election to be published.
July 3	Candidates May Begin to Qualify at 8:00A.M. at the City Clerk's Office, located at 203 Clubhouse Drive, Suite B, Gulf Shores AL 36542 (yellow building, upstairs)
July 17	Last Day to Qualify by 5:00PM.
August 17	Last Day to Register to Vote for General Election.
August 23	Deadline to Apply for Regular Absentee Ballot for General Election.
August 28	Last Day to Return Regular Absentee Ballots for General Election. (12:00 noon)
August 28	Election Day.*
September 28	Last Day to Register to Vote for Run-off Election.
October 4	Deadline for Applying for Regular Absentee Ballot for Run-off Election.
October 9	Last Day to Return Regular Absentee Ballots for Run-off Election. (12:00 noon)
October 9	Run-off Election.*
November 5	Elected Mayor and Council Members Assume Office.

* Polls Open - 7:00AM to 7:00 PM



SMALL TOWN, BIG BEACH

How to vote by absentee ballot

Make sure you're eligible to vote by absentee ballot

You may vote by absentee ballot if:

- You will be absent from the county on Election Day
- You are ill or have a physical disability that prevents a trip to the polling location
- You are a registered Alabama voter who is temporarily living outside of the country (such as a member of the Armed Forces, employed outside of USA, a college student, or a spouse or child of such person)
- You are an appointed election officer or poll watcher at a polling location other than your regular polling location
- You work a required shift – 10 hours or more – that coincides with polling hours

Apply for your absentee ballot

Download and complete the Alabama Absentee Ballot Application form. Mail or hand-deliver your completed form to:

Wanda Parris , City Clerk
PO Box 299
203 Clubhouse Drive, Suite B
Gulf Shores, Alabama 36547

Absentee ballots for elections more than 30 days apart must be requested on separate applications. This restriction does not apply if you are a member of the armed forces or you are a United States citizen residing overseas, or you are a spouse or dependent of such person. The absentee election manager may not accept multiple applications which are mailed in one envelope. AGO 1982-551 (to Hon. Don Siegelman, September 10, 1982).

How to vote by absentee ballot

The absentee ballot comes with three envelopes-- one plain (the secrecy envelope), one with an affidavit, or oath, printed on the outside, and one plain envelope, pre-addressed (the outer envelope). Once the voter casts the ballot, the procedure is as follows:

1. Seal the ballot in the plain envelope
2. Place the plain envelope inside the accompanying affidavit envelope
3. Seal the affidavit envelope and complete the affidavit that is on the outside of the envelope
4. Sign the affidavit and have the signature witnessed by either a notary public or two witnesses 18 years of age or older
5. Place the affidavit envelope and a **copy of your identification** (NOT THE ORIGINAL) inside the outer envelope.

Hand deliver or mail your ballot back to:

Wanda Parris, City Clerk
PO Box 299
203 Clubhouse Drive, Suite B
Gulf Shores, Alabama 36547




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Important Deadlines for Voting Absentee

- **Voter Registration Form:** Due to the Board of Registrars by **AUGUST 18** to vote in the municipal election.
- **Absentee ballot application:** The deadline to apply for a regular absentee ballot for the municipal election is **AUGUST 23**.
- **Absentee ballot due:** Postmarked by the day **BEFORE** the election and received by noon on Election Day (mailed); received by 5:00 pm on the day **BEFORE** the election (hand-delivered).
- **Voting absentee in person:** City Hall hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

OFFICIAL BALLOT
GENERAL
MUNICIPAL ELECTION
CITY OF GULF SHORES, ALABAMA
AUGUST 28, 2012

TO VOTE, COMPLETE THE ARROW
POINTING TO YOUR CHOICE, LIKE THIS: 

FOR CITY COUNCIL,
PLACE NO. 1
(Vote for One)


LYNN BYRD 

JOE GARRIS, JR. 

RON KUTTER 

FOR CITY COUNCIL,
PLACE NO. 3
(Vote for One)

PHILIP HARRIS 

WOODROW WILSON "Chip" WISDOM 

END OF BALLOT

BALLOT STYLE - 1

BALLOT STYLE - 1

OFFICIAL BALLOT
GENERAL
MUNICIPAL ELECTION
CITY OF GULF SHORES, ALABAMA
AUGUST 28, 2012



SMALL TOWN, BIG BEACH

Qualifications for Office

All Candidates must have been a resident of the City for at least ninety (90) days prior to the election, and must be a qualified elector of the City. Candidates for election are required to reside within the limits of the City during the term of office.

The qualifying fee for a Mayoral candidate is \$50.00.

The qualifying fee for a City Council candidate is \$25.00.

Candidates may begin qualifying July 3rd. Qualifying forms are available from the City Clerk.

Last day to qualify is July 17, 2012.

Should you need additional information, please call the City Clerk, Wanda Parris, at 251-968-1125 or send an email to: wparris@gulfshoresal.gov.

Election Deadlines for Candidates

- August 28, 2011 First day candidates for municipal elections can begin to raise money. §17-22A-7(b)(2) [§17-5-7(b)(2)]. Under general law, there is no limitation on the amount an individual may contribute to the campaign of a person running for municipal office. However, a corporation is limited to giving \$500 per candidate per election. §§10-2A-70.1 and 10-2A-70.2.
- May 30, 2012 Last day a person can become a resident of the municipality and still be a candidate for election. Candidates must reside in the municipality for a period of 90 days before the election. §11-46-25(g); §11-43-63.
- July 3, 2012 Mayor gives notice of the election for the August 28 Municipal Election. Candidates may begin qualifying. Qualifying forms are available from the City Clerk. §11-46-22(a).

NOTE: The Fair Campaign Practices Act requires all candidates to file with the PROBATE JUDGE a list of from two to five persons who will serve as their campaign committee. Candidates may serve as their own committee, but must still file a form to this effect with the PROBATE JUDGE. **THIS FORM MUST BE FILED WITHIN FIVE (5) DAYS OF QUALIFYING TO RUN FOR OFFICE. THIS FORM MUST BE FILED REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE CANDIDATE HAS REACHED THE \$1,000 THRESHOLD UNDER THE FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES ACT.** Forms are available from the probate judge or Secretary of State or the municipal clerk. §17-5-4.

IN ADDITION, once a candidate establishes a principal campaign committee pursuant to the Fair Campaign Practices Act, the committee must file monthly campaign disclosure reports pursuant to §17-5-8. The reports are due on the last day of the month up to one month from the election at which point the reports are due weekly on Fridays leading up to the election. §17-5-8.

ALSO, the Ethics Law requires candidates to file a statement of economic interests with the MUNICIPAL CLERK. **THIS STATEMENT MUST BE FILED ALONG WITH THE QUALIFYING FORM.** A candidate for municipal office may request a five day extension to file the statement of economic interests. The request must be made through the MUNICIPAL

CLERK. The statement of economic interests must be filed with the MUNICIPAL CLERK within the five day extension. **THE CLERK IS REQUIRED TO REMOVE FROM THE BALLOT THE NAME OF ANY CANDIDATE WHO FAILS TO FILE THE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS BY THE DEADLINE.** Incumbents do not have to file the statement of economic interests as they are required to submit an annual report which is on file with the ETHICS COMMISSION. §36-25-15.

July 23, 2012	Last possible day for candidates to file with the PROBATE JUDGE a statement showing the names of their campaign committee. §17-5-4. Last day for the clerk to forward statements of economic interests filed by candidates to the Ethics Commission. §36-25-15.
July 24, 2012	Absentee Voting begins at Noon.
July 27, 2012	Principal campaign committee must file a weekly campaign disclosure report with the PROBATE JUDGE pursuant to §17-5-8.
August 3, 2012	Principal campaign committee must file a weekly campaign disclosure report with the PROBATE JUDGE pursuant to §17-5-8.
August 10, 2012	Principal campaign committee must file a weekly campaign disclosure report with the PROBATE JUDGE pursuant to §17-5-8.
August 13, 2012	Last day for the Council to appoint election officials.
August 17, 2012	Principal campaign committee must file a weekly campaign disclosure report with the PROBATE JUDGE pursuant to §17-5-8.
August 18, 2012	Last day to register to vote for the Municipal Election on August 28
August 23, 2012	Last day for voter to apply for a regular absentee ballot. §17-11-3(a). Last day to publish a list of qualified voters. §17-8-9
August 24, 2012	Principal campaign committee must file a weekly campaign disclosure report with the PROBATE JUDGE pursuant to §17-5-8.
August 27, 2012	Last day for a voter to apply for an emergency absentee ballot if he or she is required by his or her employer to be out of the country on election day §17-11-3(d). The clerk, along with two watchers, must inspect and seal voting machines which will be used in the election beginning not later than 9:00a.m. §11-46-35.
August 28, 2012	ELECTION DAY Polls Open 7:00a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Gulf Shores Activity Center Candidates may appoint a poll watcher to observe voting procedures in the polling place. The appointment must be made in writing, signed by the candidate, and filed with the election officials at the polling place. §11-46-35

DISCLAIMER: This election calendar is provided as a service to candidates running in the Municipal Election of the City of Gulf Shores and those officials responsible for conducting the Municipal Election on August 28, 2012, with a run-off on October 9, if necessary. Use of this calendar is at the sole risk of the candidate. It is the responsibility of the candidate or official to verify the dates on which forms are due. The Alabama League of municipalities and the municipality and/or official that may distribute this form disclaim any responsibility or liability for failure to comply with any filing requirement or any other election law.



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Election Forms for the Candidate

A candidate may download required forms from the following websites:

Candidate Guidelines:

<http://www.alabamavotes.gov/CandidateGuidelines.aspx?m=candidates>

Appointment of Principal Campaign Committee and other filing reports:

<http://www.sos.state.al.us/downloads/d12.aspx?div1=Elections%20Division&types=Form>

Statement of Economic Interests:

<http://ethics.alabama.gov/forms-ecint2.aspx>



Candidate Filing Guidelines

Fair Campaign Practices Act ♦ Election 2012

Elections Division ♦ Office of the Secretary of State ♦ State of Alabama

Beth Chapman, Secretary of State

BECOMING A CANDIDATE FOR STATE, COUNTY, OR MUNICIPAL OFFICE FOR PURPOSES OF THE FCPA

The Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA) defines a candidate as a person who has:

1. **Qualified to be listed on an election ballot** by filing qualification forms with a political party or by submitting a petition to run as an independent candidate; or
2. **Received contributions or made expenditures for an election campaign equal to the following thresholds:**
 - ▶ \$25,000 or more for statewide office
 - ▶ \$ 5,000 or more for circuit or district office
 - ▶ \$10,000 or more for State Senate
 - ▶ \$ 5,000 or more for State House of Representatives
 - ▶ \$ 1,000 or more for municipal or county office

APPOINTING A PRINCIPAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Within **five (5) days** of becoming a candidate, one must file an **Appointment of Principal Campaign Committee Form** with the Secretary of State, if seeking election to a statewide, circuit, or district office, or with the local probate judge, if seeking election to a municipal or county office.

This form establishes the candidate's finance committee. A candidate may either serve as his or her own committee or may appoint a committee of two to five persons. This committee must report until dissolved.

FILING REPORTS

After exceeding the threshold amount in either contributions or expenditures, a candidate is required to file disclosure reports at specific times. If the filing threshold has not been exceeded, the candidate is not required to file disclosure reports. Failure to comply with FCPA reporting requirements may result in forfeiture of the election by the candidate and may result in a criminal conviction if prosecuted.

PRE-ELECTION REPORTS

Beginning 12 months out from an election, campaign finance disclosure reports

are required once a candidate meets the filing threshold for the office to which he or she is seeking election. These reports must be filed at the following times:

- ▶ the last day of every month beginning 12 months before any election for which the committee receives contributions or makes expenditures with a view toward influencing the election.
- ▶ each Friday beginning the month prior to the election
- ▶ on any one day, beginning 8 days before the election when the committee receives or spends funds in excess of \$5,000 on that day for any legislative, state school board or other statewide election.
- ▶ when a candidate receives a single contribution of \$20,000 or more a report is due within two business days of the date of the receipt of the contribution if it is not included in a monthly, weekly or daily report.

On the summary page, the report should include the amount of cash on hand at the beginning of the reporting period, a total of all contributions and expenditures made during the reporting period, and the ending balance. Contributions and expenditures over \$100 that have been received or expended during the reporting period should be itemized on the following pages of the report.

ANNUAL REPORT

An *Annual Report* is required during both election and non-election years. This report may be filed after January 1 and must be filed no later than January 31.

All candidates who have not dissolved their principal campaign committee and all state, county and municipal elected officials must file this report.

The summary page for the annual report includes two sections:

▶ Section I

Similar to a pre-election report, the candidate uses this section to report any activity since his or her last filing. The beginning balance is the ending balance from the last report filed. Forms 2 through 5 are used to itemize any contributions and expenditures that have not previously been reported.

▶ Section II

In this section, the candidate reports the total contributions and expenditures for the calendar year. The beginning balance is the ending balance from the last annual report filed.

REPORTS FOR ELECTIONEERING COMMUNICATIONS NEW FOR 2012

Candidates who expend more than \$1,000 on an "**electioneering communication**" are required to file disclosure reports. The reports must identify the source or sources of the funds used for the electioneering communication and the recipients of expenditures related to the electioneering communication [*§17-5-8(h)*].

This reporting requirement applies even if the candidate has not yet reached the filing threshold for the office sought by the candidate. However, the candidate is not required to duplicate any reporting. For more information, consult *Campaign Advertising Guidelines*, a document available from the Secretary of State's Elections Division.

RAISING MONEY

Candidates may begin fund raising 12 months prior to the election. They may continue fund raising for 120 days after the election to pay off campaign debts but only to the extent of any campaign debt and only for debts that are directly related to lawful campaign expenditures.

The FCPA prohibits candidates from receiving contributions from other principal campaign committees. However, principal campaign committees are allowed to transfer money from one principal campaign committee to another if the two principal campaign committees are for the same person [*§17-5-15(b)*].

State candidates cannot solicit or receive contributions any time the Alabama Legislature is in session, unless the Legislature is in session within 120 days of an election. Candidates should note, however, that this prohibition does not apply to loans they may make to their own campaign committee. Fundraising by candidates for county and municipal offices is not affected by legislative sessions.

The FCPA limits state and local principal campaign committees from receiving more than \$1,000 from federal campaign committees [*§17-5-15.1*].

DISSOLVING A PRINCIPAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

The chairman or treasurer of the campaign committee should submit a **Statement of Dissolution Form** to the secretary of state or local probate judge to dissolve a committee. The **Statement of Dissolution** must be accompanied by a final report detailing contributions and expenditures not previously reported and stating how excess funds will be distributed.

USE OF CAMPAIGN FUNDS

Candidates may use their campaign funds only as follows [*§17-5-7(a)*]:

- ▶ For necessary and ordinary expenditures of the campaign.
- ▶ For expenditures that are reasonably related to performing the duties of the

office held. Expenditures that are reasonably related to performing the duties of the office held do not include personal and legislative living expenses, as defined in this chapter.

- ▶ For donations to the State General Fund, the Education Trust Fund, or equivalent county or municipal funds. Donations to an organization to which a federal income tax deduction is permitted under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or any other charitable, educational, or eleemosynary cause of Section 501 of Title 26 of the U. S. Code.
- ▶ For inaugural or transitional expenses.

The FCPA prohibits candidates from giving contributions to [*§17-5-15(b)*]:

- ▶ Political action committees
- ▶ 527 organizations
- ▶ Private foundations
- ▶ Principal campaign committees

Principal campaign committees are allowed to transfer from one principal campaign committee to another if the two principal campaign committees are for the same person [*§17-5-15(b)*].

STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS

All candidates are required by the state ethics law (*§36-25-14, Code of Alabama, 1975*) to file a *Statement of Economic Interests* with the appropriate election official at the same time they become a candidate. For more information on this requirement, contact the State Ethics Commission, P.O. Box 4840, Montgomery, AL 36103-4840, (334) 242-2997.

FEDERAL CANDIDATES

Candidates for federal office must comply with federal laws administered by the Federal Election Commission. The FEC can be reached by phone at 1-800-424-9530. The FEC web site is www.fec.gov.

JUDICIAL CANDIDATES

Judicial candidates are required by Canon 6C of the **Canons of Judicial Ethics** to make some additional filings with the clerk of the Alabama Supreme Court.

DISCLAIMER

This document is not a substitute for the *Code of Alabama, 1975*, as amended. This document is provided as a guide and is not intended to be an authoritative statement of law. For further legal information, please consult the *Code of Alabama, 1975*, as amended, or other appropriate legal resources.

Who Took My Sign?

Many citizens are not familiar with sign regulations that apply to yard sale signs, political signs, and real estate signs. No sign, except for traffic control signs and signs erected by government entities to aid the traveling public, may be placed upon the public rights-of-way. This is a State law, a County regulation, and a City ordinance, so there is not an exception within the City of Gulf Shores. Signs may not be placed upon utility poles, trees, street sign posts, or light posts. Further, no sign may be placed by an individual upon publicly owned property, such as parks or government facilities.

Political signs may be placed upon private property with the permission of the property owner. Since this is an election year, candidates and their supporters should be careful in the placement of these signs, so that they are not removed from the rights-of-way.

The public rights-of-way consist not only of the paved street, but also the area behind the curb line that contains underground utility lines and utility poles and sidewalks. Most subdivision streets have a 50' wide right-of-way with the street and curbs taking approximately 27' leaving 11.5' behind the curb for utilities and sidewalks. The actual residential lot does not extend to the pavement, but only to the right-of-way line. Thus, no sign should be placed closer than 12' behind the curb line or 25' from the center line of the street. The rights-of-way along collector streets and thoroughfares can vary from 50' to more than 300' depending on the area.

If you need additional information concerning signs, please contact the City Clerk at 968-1125 or the City Planning and Zoning Office at 968-1151 or 968-1148.